

Long Island Sound Study
Management Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, April 18, 2002
Stamford, Connecticut

Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:07AM and asked if there were any changes to the January 24 meeting notes; as no changes were proposed, the notes were approved as written. After self-introductions of attendees, (see Attachment 1) Tedesco proceeded to the following agenda items.

1. CAC Co-Chair Report

Nancy Seligson reported that the last three CAC meetings in December 2001, and January and March 2002, were devoted to developing the CAC's strategic direction for the next 3-5 years and reorganizing the CAC to better achieve its mission and goals. Seligson indicated that the facilitator for these sessions, Suzanne Orenstein of Resolve, Inc., did a very good job working with the CAC members and subcommittee chairs. The CAC has organized itself into six subcommittees: communications; tracking and monitoring, sediments and dredge management, land use and watershed management, living marine resources, and membership. Each subcommittee developed work plans that were reviewed and approved by the full CAC at the March 14 meeting. The CAC also developed and approved guidelines for the operation of the subcommittees. The CAC subcommittees met simultaneously during the afternoon of the March 14 meeting, which was the first time subcommittees met in person together as groups. It was evident that there were not enough people to do the work, as many people were on more than one subcommittee. Seligson reported that the CAC generally felt that there was not enough time to have accomplished all of their goals. A challenge to the group is that some described their role as "doers" and some as "advisors," so the CAC agreed to let the "doers" do and the "advisors" advise. The CAC felt that it is still open to future planning discussions and issues, but after the three planning meetings, some were exhausted by the process itself and were anxious to get back to normal business. Seligson said that the CAC needs to know more about what the LISS is doing, and how to better link the CAC to the budget process.

2. Monitoring Conference Results

Mark Tedesco reported on the results of the March 6-7, 2002 monitoring conference held at UCONN Avery Point. The purpose of the invitational conference was to begin discussions among scientists, managers, and academia concerning transitioning from the traditional hypoxia-based monitoring plan and program for Long Island Sound to a broader ecosystem-based monitoring process. The conference proceedings are being summarized by Battelle, Inc., the support contractor, and should be available within a month. The draft proceedings contain thirteen pages of major conclusions; there was no attempt made to comprehensively capture all of the plenary session discussions, which were detailed and extensive. Tedesco reported that one significant outcome of the conference was the identification of a need for a better mechanism for discussion and presentation of technical issues outside the scope of the management committee on particular topics that fall between or cross over existing technical work groups. There is a growing need to address overarching technical and environmental issues, such as the monitoring plan and program and setting research priorities. Tedesco indicated that a budget proposal will be presented later in the agenda to set aside funds to support reestablishing a Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). Two immediate

tasks for the STAC would be to develop a list of priority research needs to guide the next research announcement, and to recommend real priority monitoring enhancements stemming from the conference. Tedesco envisioned that a key feature of the new STAC is that it would be a small mixed group of approximately 15 scientists, managers, engineers, and researchers. Milan Keser of Dominion Resources, Inc., recommended including industry representation on the group. Tedesco indicated that, based on the outcome of the budget proposal as decided by the management committee, he would follow up with Drs. Yarish and Swanson, the TAC co-chairs, to identify an industry participant for the group and draft up a charge that would be circulated back to the management committee for review.

3. FY2002 Work Plan/Budget Process

Joe Salata gave a brief update on the funds available for the FY2002 budget and work plan (see Attachment 2). The President's Budget for LISS is \$477,400. Congress appropriated \$2,022,600 under CWA Section 119 in EPA's *Environmental Programs and Management* appropriation. Salata indicated that EPA's National Estuary Program allocated \$510,000 under CWA Section 320 for the LISS. The draft FY02 NEP funding guidance had recommended eliminating these NEP funds for LISS, but the Committee and the New York and Connecticut Commissioners' offices and the CAC had sent letters to EPA objecting to that provision in the guidance. At the January 24 meeting the Committee had approved the use of the \$4,000,000 in EPA's *State and Tribal Assistance Grants* appropriation for water quality infrastructure improvement projects, and the states of CT/NY will prepare separate grant applications for these funds. The total FY2002 program planning target is \$7.01 million.

Mark Tedesco reviewed each proposed budget line item based on an abstract prepared by the LISO (see Attachment 3). The focus of the discussion was on new proposals or proposals that the Committee had questions on at the January 24, 2002 meeting. The committee asked a number of questions and discussed in detail a number of issues that are not summarized here. Briefly, the committee's principal inquiries were in the following areas: 1) the duties, responsibilities, and physical location of the proposed USFWS Research Coordinator position through an interagency agreement with EPA/LISO; 2) the efficacy of reprinting Sound Health 2003, and the frequency of issuance of the report; 3) the efficiency of aerial photography vs satellite imagery in conducting tidal wetlands mapping in general, and the relative benefits to LIS as a whole of the proposed NY project and its cost as compared with the CT mapping project; 4) the relationship of the phytoplankton molecular analysis project to ongoing phytoplankton analysis; 5) the level of funds to be committed to SWEM; 6) the amount of funds to be reserved for the LIS research grant program vs the level of funds previously committed to 2001 projects from the 2002 budget, including the targeting of 2002 research funds to a specific priority area; 7) funds to be reserved for CAC and TAC support; and 8) funds for benthic investigations pursuant to underwater reserve designations in NYS. The committee agreed on the final FY2002 allocations as presented in Attachment 4, with the understanding that any unallocated FY02 funds would be used to offset FY03 budget expenses by forward-funding one or more existing base programs.

4. 2002 LIS Agreement

Mark Tedesco reported that there is not as yet an agreed-upon signing date for the 2002 LIS Agreement. CTDEP public affairs staff were working with the Governor's office to determine available dates, but the Governor's schedule would probably not be able to accommodate the event until after the General Assembly recesses in mid-May.

5. Updates

New Committee Representative. The CTDEP had requested that the Committee consider formalizing the Office of Long Island Sound Programs (OLISP) participation on the Committee. On April 3, 2002 the Committee invited OLISP to name a representative (see Attachment 5). [NB: Betsey Wingfield, Assistant Director of OLISP was nominated to the Committee on April 24, 2002 (see Attachment 6)]

2002 CCMP Implementation Report. Joe Salata reported that EPA's Oceans and Coastal Protection Division (OCPD) staff conducted the 2002 CCMP Implementation Review, formerly known as the Biennial Review, on Monday and Tuesday, April 1-2, 2002. The HQ team, composed of Tim Jones and Greg Colianni of the National Estuary Program staff, met with the LISO staff in the afternoon in Stamford on April 1. On April 2 they met with Implementation Team staff at a special meeting hosted by Save the Sound at their new offices in Norwalk. I-Team members reviewed various elements of the LISS with the HQ team and answered their questions in the morning session. The afternoon consisted of a tour of the Norwalk River Watershed area, which was organized by Jessica Kaplan, the watershed coordinator, and Mel Côté of EPA New England Region. The on-site tour was attended by many of the Norwalk River project sponsors and supporters. Walter Smith, water quality coordinator for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)/CT presented an overview of the Norwalk River Initiative to the group, and Todd Bobowick, resource conservationist of NRCS/CT, led the group on a walk-through of several habitat restoration project sites on the River.

LISWA Citizens Summit. John Atkin reported on the Saturday, April 6, 2002 Long Island Sound Watershed Alliance (LISWA) Citizens Summit that was co-sponsored by LISWA and the LISS and held at the New York Botanical Gardens in the Bronx. More than 100 people attended the meeting, which featured James Howard Kuntsler, author of *The City in Mind: Notes on the Urban Condition*, and *Home from Nowhere: Remaking Our Everyday World for the Twenty-First Century*, who spoke about land use and development decisions and their importance to the environment. The theme of the summit was "*What You Can Do*," focusing on personal action and behavioral changes to improve the environment.

National Coastal Assessment. Paul Stacey reported on CTDEP's participation in EPA's National Coastal Assessment, formerly known as Coastal 2000, in 2000-2001. CTDEP collected samples at 32 offshore stations, 15 in 2000 and the remainder in 2001. The profiles collected were for nutrients, chlorophyll a, sediment, benthic community and habitat indicators. Thirty fisheries stations were sampled, 15 each year. Ten stations were near-shore in 2000 and ten more were added in 2001. For 2002, additional sampling will be done for phytoplankton pigment characterization at 17 stations monthly; for zooplankton at six stations

over twelve months. The nearshore program will focus on sediments and the benthos at 20 stations. Thirty fisheries stations will again be sampled, and possibly one continuous monitoring station will be included if feasible.

2001 CCMP Implementation Tracking Report. Joe Salata reported completion of the *2001 CCMP Implementation Tracking Report*, and handed out copies. The report is posted on the LISS website, at <http://www.epa.gov/region01/eco/lis>. Salata thanked those agencies and organizations that contributed to the report and indicated that the report will be distributed to the CAC prior to its June 13 meeting for their use in recommending CCMP implementation priorities for the coming year.

LIS Ecological Reserve. Don Henne briefly recounted the USFWS work to date on the ecological component of the LIS reserve system, and handed out a detailed progress report, which is available upon request to the LISO.

2002 LIS Research Conference. Paul Stacey handed out a flyer announcing the 2002 LIS research conference, scheduled for October 24, 25, 26, 2002 at UCONN Avery Point. This biennial conference is being jointly held in cooperation with the New England Estuarine Research Society. Contact Susan McNamara at 860 405-9166 or Pat Kremer, 860 405-9140 for information.

6. Sound Ideas Public Comment Period

Mark Tedesco opened the floor to public comment and recognized Art Glowka, who expressed his continuing concern over the lack of lobsters in the western Sound and the decline of finfish stocks. Glowka questioned the need for money spent on models rather than on critters.

7. Wrap Up & July Agenda Items

Mark Tedesco advised that the next management committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 18, 2002 in Stamford. Agenda topics suggested for the July meeting included updates from the standing work groups. Management Committee members should submit suggestions for agenda topics to LISO by June 21. There being no other business, Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 2:45 PM.

List of Attachments

1. List of Attendees
2. FY2002 LISS Funding Overview
3. FY2002 LISS Budget/Work Plan Abstract
4. Final FY2002 LISS Budget/Work Plan
5. April 3, 2002 Management Committee Letter to CTDEP/OLISP
6. April 24, 2002 CTDEP OLISP Letter